

Dear Floyd,

1/11/63

The letter you mailed on the 30th came here promptly enough and I read it when I got it, but I postponed reading the enclosure until I'd had other things off my mind so I could pay attention to it.

This piece is better than some of the earlier ones but you still reach too far and for too much. You also, while doing less of it, also stretch to fit in what you think may sound or read good. I think the most important thing for you in writing is to think and be simple.

To illustrate: does a Scaud of Democles really "loom," as you say?

Why don't you reread this piece and ask yourself how much of what you say is you saying it, whether there is something in this that you have not seen before, and if there is, do you need or really want the rest to take attention away from it or to lead some readers to ask themselves if they haven't heard or read all that before?

I am not aware that anyone has ever said anything about the possibility of the entire government being wiped out, so what do we do about it. I think the rest of this can be abandoned and that developed.. I'd not try to do anything with it with your present return address, but while you are there, why not try to work that one idea over, and forget all the rest, which add nothing at all to it or to what has been written over and over again.

You may want to say more, I don't know. But keep it simple. For example, why the detail of the parking of a van in front of the White House. Do you think it would dirty there, uncollected, long enough for anyone to get far enough away from the blast? I don't. Besides, it could be parked anywhere, even abandoned in a parking lot, couldn't it?

Avoid using large words. They are not necessary and often they can connote other than what you have in mind.

Whether another jail book could be published today I don't know. I think the odds are against it absent something really new and different. But if you have this in mind, make all the notes you can now. Incidents, people, situations, problems (solutions?), attitudes, anecdotes, etc.

Intellectually this can have meaning for you now, so think all you can about it. But my own opinion is that you will serve yourself much better if you think about what possibilities you may have when you are out, how you can make a living, anyway at all to begin with, but with your eye and mind on something better after you are on your feet again.

My own belief is that you are best suited for contact-type work. You were always very good at that, and I think you also liked it. I don't know where you can get a chance at it, but opportunities might come later. If you have a library available and they have any books on this, now is a good time for you to be reading them. You'll have less time if you get a job and your evenings are free.

We both look forward to seeing you here a free man. It won't be long now!

Our best to you and yours,